

Armenian people. And most importantly, it will reaffirm U.S. leadership in preventing and responding to similar atrocities and in advancing the rights of vulnerable populations around the world.

This year, as we take time to remember and honor the victims of the Armenian genocide, I hope the United States will finally stand on the right side of history and affirm the incontestable fact of the Armenian genocide.

TRIBUTE TO REAR ADMIRAL STEPHEN P. METRUCK

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I wish to honor U.S. Coast Guard RADM Stephen P. Metruck and highlight his service to country and his contribution to the State of Delaware. Rear Admiral Metruck retired on April 22 from commanding the Fifth Coast Guard District after 34 years in the U.S. Coast Guard. The fifth district includes North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware, Washington, DC, and much of Pennsylvania. Rear Admiral Metruck led 67 units made up of 2,475 Active Duty members, 1,010 Reservists, 6,800 auxiliary members, and 120 civilians.

One of Rear Admiral Metruck's most notable accomplishments occurred during his tenure at both Sector San Diego and Sector Seattle. In these dual roles, Rear Admiral Metruck was responsible for advancing Coast Guard operations in a post-9/11 environment. He forged interagency partnerships to enhance safety and security measures in each port and coordinated the sensors and systems into a common operational picture to allow all agencies to coordinate and understand potential threats in the maritime environment.

Rear Admiral Metruck and I got to know each other well during harsh, back-to-back winters that damaged navigation aids along the Delaware River, which assisted ships traveling to and from Wilmington, DE. From this experience, I learned that it is not easy budgeting for ice flows. Being an expert at budgeting and solving problems, he and his team forged solutions that replaced damaged buoys and aids to navigation without a huge burden on taxpayers. The result was ships could again travel safely to ports in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.

Rear Admiral Metruck is a very humble man, and he will be the first to understate his contribution to the U.S. Coast Guard and leadership of the men and women under his command. Nevertheless, I have found him to be an extremely devoted public servant and skilled at working with other agencies, solving problems, and being responsive to inquiries from Senators.

Rear Admiral Metruck also spent 2½ years serving this great institution as a fellow with then-Senator John Kerry. He worked on policy issues related to the Commerce Subcommittee on Oceans and Fisheries and also supported Senator Kerry's staff on envi-

ronmental, maritime, and Coast Guard issues and legislation.

Prior to arriving at the Fifth Coast Guard District, he was the assistant commandant for resources and chief financial officer for the U.S. Coast Guard. During this assignment, he was responsible for all Coast Guard financial management and resource activities including planning, programming, budgeting, and execution of the service's \$10 billion annual appropriation.

While he has been a friend of commerce and the environment on the Delaware River, his career has resulted in him living in and serving a number of other States. He has served in Coast Guard Headquarters; Portsmouth, VA; Brownsville, TX; Tampa, FL; Buffalo, NY; San Diego, CA; and Puget Sound, WA. Rear Admiral Metruck also helped oversee Coast Guard missions across waterways encompassing the states of California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and the offshore waters of Mexico and Central America. Additionally, he served as U.S. Coast Guard Liaison to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York City.

Rear Admiral Metruck is from Massena, NY, and graduated in 1982 from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, where he earned a bachelor of science degree in ocean engineering. He was awarded a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. He has also served as a military fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC, and the Coast Guard fellow on the Chief of Naval Operations' Strategic Studies Group based in Newport, RI.

There are many of us in this Chamber who have worked with him and his staff on important issues over the years. Today I express our collective gratitude to him for devoting his career to keeping us safe. I speak for many in the Senate, in Delaware, and around our Nation in wishing Rear Admiral Metruck and his wife Peggy Duxbury a great next chapter in their lives.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL MICHAEL FRANCIS

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, today I wish to honor a man who has served faithfully for 27 years in the U.S. Air Force, with the vast majority of that service in the Missouri Air National Guard. It is a big loss, but Col. Michael Francis is scheduled to depart the 131st Bomb Wing at Whiteman Air Force Base on May 15, 2016, after a long and distinguished record of service in the unit beginning July 28, 1998.

I think it is important to note that Colonel Francis has been associated with a unit whose history has spanned over nine decades and whose former members have included the likes of aviation pioneer Charles Lindbergh.

Colonel Francis commissioned in the U.S. Air Force in 1989 as a graduate of

the U.S. Air Force Academy and, after almost a decade, transitioned from Active Duty to the Air National Guard, continuing his dream of a career as a fighter pilot in the F-15 Eagle.

Throughout Colonel Francis's service at the 131st, he has seen the unit transition from the F-15, the Nation's premier homeland defense and air superiority aircraft, to the B-2, the Nation's lethal stealth bomber involved in global missions. Since being chosen to command the first B-2 Operations Group in the Air National Guard when the 131st transitioned from the F-15 Eagle to the B-2 Spirit, Colonel Francis has been a standout leader in the nuclear community. His achievements boast nothing less than perfection. As the present wing commander, Colonel Francis paved a new path for the National Guard by leading his unit to be the first bomb wing certified for full-spectrum nuclear operations and was entrusted with strategic nuclear deterrent operations for our country.

Throughout his long career at the 131st, Colonel Francis remained dedicated to the vital missions of the Air National Guard. However, he also never forgot his commitment to his wife, Jane, and sons, Greg and Brian.

While Colonel Francis might be leaving the 131st Bomb Wing, he will continue his selflessness in service to this great country. Colonel Francis will be reassigned to the Missouri National Guard Headquarters and promoted to brigadier general.

Again, I wish to extend Col. Michael J. Francis my sincere congratulations upon his new assignment and thanks for the years of service he has rendered to the 131st Bomb Wing, the State of Missouri, and the Nation.

ALASKA MISSION 6 HONOR FLIGHT

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize six veterans from Alaska who are in Washington this week as part of the Alaska Mission 6 Honor Flight. These veterans are here to witness and experience our Nation's most hallowed memorials—built to honor their service and sacrifice and that of their brothers and sisters in arms.

On behalf of Alaska's congressional delegation, our State, and our country, I welcome these heroes to Washington and extend to them my sincere gratitude for their service.

Participating in the Alaska Mission 6 Honor Flight are John J. Boulette and William K. Zimmer, U.S. Navy veterans of the Korean war; Alexander Crockett Blanchard and Alfred Dawkins, U.S. Army veterans of the Vietnam war; Neal Henry Dallman, a U.S. Navy veteran of the Vietnam war; and Arnold Patrick McDonald, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam war.

Without the sacrifices of these six men and so many others, defending peace and liberty in some of the most dangerous corners of the world during